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Grant funds open-source challenge to Google library

Internet Archive receives \$1 million from charitable trust to help boost up its open-source alternative to book-scanning efforts.



Written by Candace Lombardi on Dec. 20, 2006

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The nonprofit Internet Archive announced Wednesday it has received \$1 million from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to continue its effort to scan public domain works for open online accessibility.

The archiving organization's [Open-Access Text Archive](#) is an open-source alternative to book-scanning efforts like the ones from [Google](#) and Microsoft. Internet Archive, perhaps best known for its [WayBack Machine](#) archive of Web pages by date--is also an online digital library of text, audio, software, images and video content.

"Brewster Kahle and the Internet Archive are pioneers in this exciting and historic opportunity to create a universal digital library that is both open-access and non-proprietary," said Doron Weber, who oversees public understanding of science and technology at the Sloan Foundation, in a statement.

Kahle was one of the inventors of Wide Area Information Servers (WAIS), a text-based search system that searched database indexes on remote servers before there were Internet search engines. After WAIS was sold to AOL in 1995 for several million dollars, Kahle founded the Internet Archive, which works closely with the [Open Content Alliance \(OCA\)](#). The OCA developed a set of principles dedicated to a "permanent archive of multilingual digitized text and multimedia content" for free and open access.

The grant from the Sloan charitable trust will enable Internet Archive and the OCA to scan collections from several major institutions, including the entire collection of publications from the Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as several thousand images from the museum; [John Adams' personal library](#) of over 3,800 works at the Boston Public Library; and other collections from The Getty Research Institute, Johns Hopkins University and the University of California, Berkeley.

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The announcement comes just after the San Francisco-based Internet Archive reached the milestone of scanning 100,000 books. That may not sound like a lot compared to Google Book Search's claim of millions within a decade, but the OCA has ramped up its scanning recently to about 12,000 books a month. According to its own statistics, the organization has also archived 65 billion pages from 50 million Web sites.

"Google is so good at the media being their PR machine, that you would not know there was an alternative out there," Kahle said. "We have brand name institutions going open and foundations like the Sloan are funding (us). It shows that the Open Content Alliance is viable, that there is support for public interest. We don't have to privatize the library system."

Google has begun to offer full-text, printable PDFs of public domain works with plans to add more as it scans more books. But its platform is closed, and its PDF pages have a "Digitized by Google" watermark. The company is not planning to share its scanned material with the OCA or Internet Archive, according to Kahle.

"We think they (Google) are doing great stuff. If the materials would be made available for broad public search and educational use we'd be all for it, but in my discussion with the founders (Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin) they aren't going to," said Kahle.

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Google did not respond to requests for comment about its book scanning project.

"It shows that the Open Content Alliance is viable, that there is support for public interest. We don't have to privatize the library system."

Google scans and indexes both public domain and copyright works, an issue that has raised legal concerns. The Google Book Search engine restricts full access to copyright works while still offering snippet views, instead of excluding the work from its search feature altogether, according to the Google Book Search Web site.

-Brewster Kahle,
 Internet Archive
 founder

"This whole Google Book Search looks like Amazon's Search Inside the Book," said Kahle.
 "Let's go open with these collections...These are beautiful books."

Yahoo is a supporter of the OCA and has helped the OCA index some of the scanned content, but its project is smaller than those of Google and Microsoft, according to Gregory Crane, a classics professor and digital library expert at Tufts University.

Microsoft was an early supporter of the OCA and in June worked with it on a project scanning and indexing materials from the University of California and the University of Toronto libraries as part of its [Windows Live Book Search project](#). But Microsoft has become more proprietary in recent months, Kahle said.

"We continue to work with Microsoft, but the results going forward are not strictly OCA principles," Kahle later added in an e-mail. "To their credit, they are interested in helping get more scanning done in the open, of course because they can use the books as well, but still, this is more than other projects."

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Jay Giroto, who heads Microsoft's Live Book Search selection team, further explained his company's position.

"We support the fundamental mission of the OCA, and hope that many more partners like the Sloan Foundation will step forward and contribute significant resources to scan public-domain materials under the OCA principles," he said in a statement.

Research impacts

Tufts' Crane thinks the companies are reluctant to share for fear of helping the competition.

"My impression is that both Microsoft and Google don't want the other benefiting from their investment, he wrote in an e-mail. "Now each is hoarding. Ideally, each would split the cost of digitizing content and then make the public domain material available in the OCA. At the moment, Google is well ahead, and I would think that they would feel that Microsoft would benefit too much."

A lack of open-source access, Crane explained, impedes research that requires access to multiple groups of works in bulk, and prevents researchers from applying more nuanced OCR (optical character recognition) searches to those texts.

"We are evaluating OCR on classical Greek. Google runs OCR on all its texts--that's how it generates searchable OCR. The Google OCR, though, doesn't know Greek and produces no usable text as far as we can tell. Google says that you have to get permission to run OCR, etc...on its PDF books," Crane said, further explaining, "Even if the PDF books are good enough quality to support OCR--they might be lower than the archival resolution."

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"I am sure that Google would be open to us doing this work, but that means (for each academic project) getting their attention, writing letters, and a lot of hassle," Crane said. "I think it's easier and better in the long run to open the library up and let the world have at it," he said.

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This is the ultimate security key. Here's why you need one

I've tested a lot of security accessories. This is by far my favorite and the one I use.



Written by Adrian Kingsley-Hughes, Contributor on July 5, 2022

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It's not often that I say you absolutely need to buy something. But this is something you need to buy.

Two-factor authentication -- a combination of something you remember (such as a password) and something you have (a smartphone or a token) -- offers far better security than relying on passwords alone. And while SMS-based authentication is better than nothing, what's even better is hardware-based authentication.

I've tested dozens of hardware-based security keys, and the one that I use to secure my online accounts is the [Yubikey 5C NFC](#).



Yubikey 5C NFC

\$55 at Amazon

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Yubikey 5C NFC

This, for me, is the ultimate security key, offering simple, easy-to-use, yet effective security.

The Yubikey 5C NFC is a two-factor, multi-factor and passwordless authentication security key that also offers touch-to-sign functionality. It supports a wide array of protocols -- FIDO2, U2F, Smart card, OTP, OpenPGP 3 -- which means it offers strong security for legacy and modern environments.

What I like about the Yubikey

5C NFC is that it offers the best of all worlds.

Along with all the cryptographic wizardry that handles the security functionality, the 5C NFC features both a USB-C and NFC for connecting the key to devices, giving it a really broad compatibility.

You get the convenience of both a hardwired and wireless connection.

I use this on laptops and desktop systems (you can even use it on systems that only have USB-A ports [if you have an adapter](#)), Android smartphones, and even on my iPhone and iPad.

Yes, you can use NFC on the iPhone.

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The best security key

While robust passwords help you secure your valuable online accounts, hardware-based two-factor authentication takes that security to the next level.

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Everything is packaged into a tough, IP68 rated, crush resistant plastic shell. And the keys don't need batteries or recharging.



Yubikey 5C NFC

This one key works on everything I need it to work on.

I've been carrying my Yubikey 5C NFC keyring for some time now, and it stands up to the rough abuse that things in my possession have to endure. That said, it's recommended that you have a backup key in case your main key is lost, stolen, or damaged in some way. Note that you will have to register your second key, but that some services don't support multiple keys.

The [Yubikey 5C NFC](#) is an accessory that I use pretty much every day. For me, it's one of those must-have things that isn't as shiny and exciting as a new smartphone, but it's absolutely indispensable.

And for \$55, it's far more affordable than a new smartphone or laptop.

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 'yes, you can use NFC on the iPhone.'

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Everything is packaged into a tough, IP68 rated, crush resistant plastic shell. And the keys don't need batteries or recharging.



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He flew American Airlines, she flew United. For both, the unthinkable happened

Airlines are currently letting a lot of passengers down. Just how bad is it? These two stories offer a clue.



Written by Chris Matyszczyk, Contributor on July 3, 2022

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Not all flights are the same. Even now.(A screenshot from a United video)

A screenshot from a United video.

A lot of Americans are thinking twice these days.

Should they fly somewhere, anywhere? Or should they tolerate the high price of gas and drive somewhere, anywhere?

Currently, America's airlines seem to enjoy all the efficiency and competence of, well,

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America's politicians.

Welcome to the trusted experiences-led economy

Delta, for example, got so desperate that it essentially

begged passengers to fly at any other time than the Fourth of July weekend, by offering them free flight changes to any other time of the year.

But is it all so bad? Two surprising stories may offer a certain perspective on the madness.

Driven Mad.

First, the tale of Brian Driver. He was flying on business. He was booked on American Airlines. He was aware this was the Thursday before the long Father's Day weekend.

He wanted to change his return flights. So, as the *Wall Street Journal* recounts it, he first tried using modern technology. You know, things like the app and the American Airlines website. He couldn't make the changes.

He resorted to more ancient technology -- the phone. A machine told him the wait time was eight hours.

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Back to more modern ways, he tried the chat option. Within a piffling ninety minutes, he talked to an agent. But then he wasn't able to get the seat he wanted. He tried calling again. Oh, the futility of a system when an airline simply doesn't have enough customer service staff to operate it.

This drove Driver to distraction. It drove him to drive for forty-five minutes to Denver Airport. He marched up to the ticket counter and finally got what he wanted -- customer service.

The airline, naturally, blamed a combination of factors for slow customer service -- air traffic control and weather, for example -- but not, oddly enough, the possibility that it doesn't have enough staff to cope with significant disruptions.

It does seem extreme that a customer has to do something so extreme to finally receive what some might call basic customer service.

It also seems extreme that airlines are blaming operational issues, staff shortages, weather, and air traffic control for what appears to be an insufficient number of actual employees hired in advance of what was clearly going to be an enormous surge in demand.

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Please Don't Do It. It'll Drive You Mad.

So when my wife told me she was flying to a conference in Orlando last week, I was a little concerned. (Alright, a lot.)

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A cross country flight to Orlando in June? This was asking for mayhem.

It isn't just the weather that's always likely to disrupt the Floridian air in the summer. It's, well, flying right now. The horror of it. Even pilots at Delta, Southwest, and American are declaring that their bosses have no idea what they're doing.

Pilots at United, slightly less so. This may have something to do with the fact that they've just reached an agreement with their bosses on a new contract -- which the other three airlines' pilots haven't.

My wife booked an early morning flight out of San Francisco but was forced to book an evening flight out of Orlando a few days later. Both flights were with United, as she believed that a non-stop option offered the best hope.

The night before her flight, a colleague going to the same conference texted that she'd had a torrid time on Delta. She'd sat on the tarmac for two hours. Worse, those two hours were in Tampa.

I wished my wife much good fortune, shut my eyes, and waited for the bad news.

After a few hours, she texted: "Guess which airport we landed at."

"I give up," I replied. "New Orleans?"

"Orlando."

A tinge of disbelief coursed through my soul. The flight was on time? It landed in the right city? She could get to her conference's opening ceremony?

It seemed so. I felt sure, though, that her return flight would offer discomfort. It had to, right?

Finally, Not On Time.

Oh, the lines at Orlando airport were long. Yet, said my wife, they kept on moving. It only took her twelve minutes to get through security.

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But the flight was delayed, you wonder? No. It wasn't on time, either. It actually arrived early. There wasn't even a crying baby to be heard, said my wife.

Just as Brian Driver's experience was unthinkable, so was my wife's. Two extremes in absurdly extreme times.

This isn't for a moment to suggest American is less competent than United -- even though American's own pilots believe that's true.

It's more to honor those airline employees who are working as hard as they can, in the face of laughable levels of mismanagement, to get as many people to their destinations as possible.

Many of them can't work from home. They have to face the disgruntled, the desperate, and the angry.

It's always the service employees -- especially those who face customers every day -- who suffer the most and are paid among the least.

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And, peculiarly, it's always the service employees who get laid off -- or encouraged to take early retirement -- first in a downturn, even when airlines take billions of the people's money.

It doesn't seem quite right, does it?

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Cloud computing is about to hit another big milestone

The amount spent on shared cloud IT infrastructure will overtake spending on traditional IT gear for data centers in 2022 for the first time.



Written by Liam Tung, Contributor on July 4, 2022

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Image: Shutterstock

Spending on cloud services is about to hit another key tipping point, as business customers spent \$18.3 billion on [cloud computing and storage infrastructure](#) in the first quarter (Q1) of 2022, up 17.2% year over year.

The total includes budgets on shared and dedicated infrastructure. A major driver of growth was spending on shared cloud infrastructure, which made up \$12.5 billion (68%) of the total. That sub-category was also up 15.7% compared to Q1 2021, [according to tech analyst IDC](#).

With growing demand for shared cloud spending in particular, IDC expects spending on shared cloud infrastructure to overtake non-cloud spending in 2022 -- for the first time.

IDC has been monitoring relative spending between cloud and non-cloud infrastructure to measure the change in purchasing of traditional data center compute, storage equipment and IT infrastructure in public clouds from Amazon Web

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Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, and others such as Digital Ocean.

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SEE: What is cloud computing? Everything you need to know about the cloud explained

The outlook appears solid for non-cloud IT infrastructure providers, but not as rosy as it is for cloud providers. In this quarter, spending on non-cloud infrastructure still grew year over year to \$14.8 billion, up 9.8%. It was the fifth consecutive quarter of growth.

IDC doesn't provide a snapshot of the revenue share between public cloud providers, but analyst Canalys recently reported AWS received 33% of the \$53.5 billion spent globally on cloud infrastructure in Q4 2021, followed by 22% to Azure, and 9% to Google Cloud. Other providers took the remaining 36%.

Spending on cloud infrastructure has accelerated since the pandemic began in March 2020, as businesses accelerated digital transformations. Spending had grown for seven consecutive quarters since Q3 2019, with the exception of a 1.9% year over year decline in Q2 2021. Q2 2020 saw the highest year over year growth of 38.4%. In Q4 2021, spending on cloud infrastructure was up 13.5% in the quarter year on year to \$21.1 billion.

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Non-cloud spending remains a huge market and is expected to grow for the full year -- albeit at a much slower pace than cloud spending.

For the full year 2022, IDC forecasts cloud infrastructure spending to grow 22% compared to 2021 and reach \$90.2 billion. This is the highest annual growth rate since 2018, it notes. Spending on traditional IT infrastructure is expected to grow 1.8% to \$60.7 billion.

Greater purchasing of cloud-delivered infrastructure only explains part of the rise in spending. Other contributing factors include inflation and the gradual recovery of the world's snarled supply chains and logistics networks.

At a regional level, IDC expects annual growth in cloud infrastructure spending to grow in the 20% to 25% range in Asia Pacific/Japan, China, the US, and Western Europe. Due to Russia's attack on Ukraine, spending in Central and Eastern Europe is expected to decline 54% in 2022.

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The analyst expects spending on compute and storage cloud infrastructure to have a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.5% between 2021 and 2026. It forecasts spending to reach \$145.2 billion in 2026, when it will account for 69.7% of total compute and storage infrastructure spend.

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It expects spending on non-cloud infrastructure to grow at 1.2% CAGR, reaching \$63.1 billion in 2026.

IDC also looks at spends of cloud service providers, digital service providers, communications service providers, and managed service providers, which account for 55.3% of IT infrastructure spending.

This group spent \$18.3 billion on computing and storage infrastructure in Q1 2022, up 14.5% year on year.

Spending by non-service providers rose 12.9% year over year in Q1 2022, which was the highest growth for 14 quarters.

Spending by service providers on IT infrastructure grew 18.7% over the year to \$89.1 billion in 2022.

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